



ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

News Release

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City of San Diego Searches for San Diego Role Model Curbside Recyclers

SAN DIEGO, CA– Beginning February 19, 2002, the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department will select 24 residents from the city's eight council districts to receive the *Curbside Recycler Excellence Award*. The residents will be chosen for their outstanding efforts to recycle in the City's Curbside Recycling Program. The City will express appreciation with public recognition and a collection of recycled products and complementary movie passes.

"Our customers make our curbside recycling program work," said Richard L. Hays, director of the City of San Diego Environmental Services Department. "If the residents who participate in the curbside recycling program recycle the right materials then we're able to divert more waste from entering our City's only landfill, the Miramar Landfill, and avoid contaminating other valuable recyclables. We want to thank those residents who make the extra effort to help our environment and hopefully those people will become role models for others."

The City's Recycling Specialists, who regularly educate residents about the curbside recycling program, will choose the City's Best Recyclers. On scheduled recycling collection days, when city Recycling Trucks collect recyclables from City issued blue bins, the Recycling Specialists will be canvassing neighborhoods to help residents identify recyclable items that are appropriate to put in their blue recycling bins.

City staff will randomly evaluate the contents of blue bins set out in the public right of way on collection day to identify 24 of San Diego's excellent recyclers. Three residents will be selected as winners from each one of the City's eight Council Districts. From February 19-23, 2002, City staff will identify 14 of the winners and award them prize packages. These winners will be highlighted in press releases to various local print media. From February 25 through

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March 1, Clear Channel Communications radio station, Magic 92.5, will identify 10 winners and present them with prize packages and highlight the winners on their morning show throughout that week.

“Three months ago, Mayor Dick Murphy delivered the last blue recycling container to a City Heights’ resident concluding the two-year citywide expansion program,” said Hays. “Currently, we have 80 percent of the city’s residences participating in the program and we collect recycling every other week from about 270,000 households. If all our customers recycle correctly, we estimate we can divert more than 70,000 tons of recyclable material from disposal in the Miramar Landfill each year.”

On average, program participants recycle approximately 45 pounds per household each month. The recycling program collects commingled recyclable items such as newspaper, clean-mixed paper, cardboard, aluminum and steel cans, glass food and beverage containers, and #1 and #2 plastic bottles.

Since the City first offered curbside recycling collection to select residences during the 1980s, approximately 280,000 tons of recyclables have been diverted from disposal at the Miramar Landfill. The recycling program has also earned more than \$11,697,400 in revenue from the sale of recyclables, which has helped fund the City’s recycling program. By diverting recyclables from the landfill during the past 11 years, the City has saved more than \$18 million from the General Fund.

For information about the curbside recycling program, please call the City’s Environmental Services Department at (858) 694-7000. For general information about recycling, contact the City’s Recycling Hotline at (858) 467-0903.

The City of San Diego’s Environmental Services Department is charged with refuse collection and disposal, recycling and environmentally sound landfill management to meet the City’s long-term disposal needs. The Department also oversees the City’s management of energy use and explores innovative options for energy independence. For more information on recycling or Environmental Services, visit the department’s web site at <http://www.sandiego.gov/environmental-services/index.shtml>